

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 OES-06 SS-15 AGRE-00 LAB-04
HEW-04 HUD-01 DOTE-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 COME-00
NAS-01 NSF-01 OPIC-03 FAA-00 ERDA-05 NSC-05
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /076 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1961

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NEA/IRN FOR NAAS FROM MIKLOS

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: USIRJC
SUBJ: PROPOSED USDA VETERINARIAN TEAM FOR IRAN

REF: 76 TEHRAN 10876

1. AS YOU MAY KNOW, ONE OF THE INITIATIVES IN THE USIRJC CONTEXT IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE IS THE ASSIGNMENT TO TEHRAN OF A 12-MAN USDA TEAM OF VETERINARIAN SPECILAIISTS. ALL WOULD BE USDA EMPLOYEES AND LOCATED IN SOME FOUR SITES IN IRAN, WITH A TEAM COORDINATOR IN TEHRAN. TOUR OF DUTY WILL BE TWO YEARS AND THE TEAM WILL DEPART FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ON-GOING ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORIES. THE TEAM WOULD PROBABLY BE IN POSITION HERE NOT MORE THAN A YEAR FROM NOW AND USDA'S ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE WOULD HOPE TO SUBMIT A DRAFT PROPOSAL TO THE GOI WITHIN A MONTH OR TWO. AS IN THE CASE OF THE HIGHWAYS TEAM, ALL COSTS WOULD BE REIMBUSABLE TO USDA. THE PROPOSAL OBVIOUSLY HAS CONSIDERABLE MERIT AND THE EMBASSY CERTAINLY FAVORS USDA'S FORTHCOMING RESPONSE TO THIS GOI MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE DESIRE TO UPGRADE ITS VETERINARIAN CAPABILITIES.

2. A REAL PROBLEM SEEMS VERY MUCH IN THE OFFING, HOWEVER, IN
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USDA'S INSISTENCE THAT ITS TEAM BE ASSIGNED AS OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE EMBASSY WITH YELLOW CARDS ISSUED BY THE MFA. MR .EDWARD F. PENSIVY, LIAISON OFFICER, ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION

SERVICE OF USDA, STATES THAT HIS ORGANIZATION'S EXPERIENCE WITH SOME 200 USDA SPECIALISTS ASSIGNED TO MEXICO SINCE 1972 REQUIRES THAT A TEAM FOR IRAN HAVE OFFICIAL STATUS. THEIR MEXICO EXPERIENCE, SAYS MR. PENSIVY, HAS BEEN SUCH THAT ONLY OFFICIAL STATUS CAN ELIMINATE WHAT HE REGARDS AS POSSIBLE, EVEN PROBABLE, HASSLES WITH IRANIAN AUTHORITIES OVER TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS, UNINTENDED BREACHES OF IRANIAN LAW, MISDEMEANORS AND THE LIKE. I, OF COURSE, HAVE NO INDEPENDENT KNOWLEDGE OF USDA'S PROBLEMS IN MEXICO AND ONLY REPORT MR. PENSIVY'S POSITION THAT OFFICIAL STATUS WITH THE EMBASSY IS THE ONLY WAY TO GUARD AGAINST A REPETITION OF THIS EXPERIENCE. MR. PENSIVY WENT ON TO SAY THAT USDA WOULD BE UNABLE TO RECRUIT THE QUALITY OF PEOPLE NECESSARY FOR THIS TEAM IF TEAM MEMBERS WERE TO BE ANYTHING LESS THAN ON THE EMBASSY OFFICIAL ROLLS. HE CONCEDED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO FIND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO COME TO IRAN WITH THE SAME STATUS ENJOYED BY THE HIGHWAYS TEAM (STATUS WHICH PENSIVY FINDS PERSONALLY UNACCEPTABLE), BUT HE SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO RECOMMEND TO HIS SUPERIORS THAT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT BE VETOED BY USDA. MR. PENSIVY ENVISIONS A PROJECT AGREEMENT, SIGNED ON THE GOI SIDE BY MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES, FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND FINANCE. ON THE U.S. SIDE, AGREEMENT WOULD BE SIGNED BY ADMINISTRATOR OF ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE, ADMINISTRATOR OF USDA ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE, AND "INITIALLED" BY THE EMBASSY.

3. AT MEETING THIS MORNING (APRIL 7) WITH ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COUSELORS AND AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE, IT WAS EXPLAINED TO MR. PENSIVY THAT THE GOI SIMPLY WOULD NOT AGREE TO THE KIND OF STATUS FOR THE TEAM WHICH USDA SEEKS. WE GAVE MR. PENSIVY THE GIST OF REFTEL, EMPHASIZING THAT THE SHAH HIMSELF, IN A CONVERSATION LATE LAST YEAR WITH AMBASSADOR HELMS, EXPLICITLY VETOED SUCH AND IDEA. WE SAID THAT THE EMBASSY DID EVERYTHING IT POSSIBLY COULD TO GET OFFICIAL EMBASSY STATUS FOR THE HIGHWAYS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TEAM BUT THAT SUCH WAS RULED OUT AT THE VERY TOP. EVEN IF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES WERE TO SIGN A PROJECT AGREEMENT WITH A CLAUSE GIVING OFFICIAL STATUS TO THE TEAM (AS DID THE MINISTER OF ROADS WITHOUT THE FULL CONCURRENCE OF MFA), SAID CLAUSE WOULD BE VIEWED BY MFA AS NULL AND VOID AND NO YELLOW CARDS WOULD EVER BE ISSUED. TEAM MEMBERS WOULD BE VIEWED BY MFA SIMPLY AS EMPLOYEES OF MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. WE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT WE SAW NO PROBLEMS IN COMMISSARY, CO-OP AND APO PRIVILEGES FOR TEAM MEMBERS WHO ARE USDA EMPLOYEES. FINALLY, WE EXPLAINED TO MR. PENSIVY THAT THE EMBASSY HAS NOW GONE THE FULL ROUTE ON THIS QUESTION AND NO FURTHER EMBASSY INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE PROPOSED VETERINARIAN TEAM, INSOFAR AS THEIR STATUS, WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

4. I HOPE YOU AND OTHER IN NEA/IRN, IN THE COURSE OF CONVERSATIONS

WITH USDA PERSONNEL, WILL REINFORCE OUR LAYING OUT THE BLUNT
FACTS AS REGARDS THIS STATUS MANNER. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO
SUPPLY THE ADMINISTRATOR OF ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION
SERVICE, MR. FRANK MULHERN, WITH A COPY OF REFTTEL.

5. WHEN USDA'S FINAL PROPOSAL IS READY FOR PRESENTATION TO
THE GOI, PLEASE ASK THAT IT BE SUBMITTED THROUGH THIS EMBASSY.
MIKLOS

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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